



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

October 21, 2013

Ms. Michelle Tapia
Assistant City Attorney
City of Carrollton
1945 East Jackson Road
Carrollton, Texas 75006

OR2013-18221

Dear Ms. Tapia:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 503016 (City ID# 1297).

The Carrollton Police Department (the "department") received a request for information related to the inclusion of the requestor's client in a "Mandatory Crime Reduction Program[, including] copies of the police reports used for purposes of calculating the offenses" used as a basis for the program designation. You state the department has released some of the requested information. You claim some of the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." *Id.* § 552.101. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes, such as section 58.007 of the Family Code. Section 58.007 provides, in pertinent part, as follows:

(c) Except as provided by Subsection (d), law enforcement records and files concerning a child and information stored, by electronic means or otherwise, concerning the child from which a record or file could be generated may not be disclosed to the public and shall be:

- (1) if maintained on paper or microfilm, kept separate from adult files and records;
- (2) if maintained electronically in the same computer system as records or files relating to adults, be accessible under controls that are separate and distinct from controls to access electronic data concerning adults; and
- (3) maintained on a local basis only and not sent to a central state or federal depository, except as provided by Subchapters B, D, and E.

Fam. Code § 58.007(c). Juvenile law enforcement records relating to delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision that occurred on or after September 1, 1997, are confidential under section 58.007. *See id.* § 51.03(a), (b) (defining “delinquent conduct” and “conduct indicating a need for supervision”). For purposes of section 58.007(c), “child” means a person who is ten years of age or older and under seventeen years of age at the time of the conduct. *See id.* § 51.02(2).

You claim the information in Exhibit C is confidential under section 58.007 of the Family Code. Upon review, we find the information at issue involves a child engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct indicating a need for supervision that occurred after September 1, 1997. As such, this information constitutes juvenile law enforcement records that are confidential pursuant to section 58.007(c). It does not appear that any of the exceptions to confidentiality under section 58.007 apply. Accordingly, the department must withhold the information in Exhibit C under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.007 of the Family Code.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code also encompasses section 261.201 of the Family Code, which provides, in relevant part:

(a) [T]he following information is confidential, is not subject to public release under [the Act], and may be disclosed only for purposes consistent with this code and applicable federal or state law or under rules adopted by an investigating agency:

- (1) a report of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect made under [chapter 261 of the Family Code] and the identity of the person making the report; and
- (2) except as otherwise provided in this section, the files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, and working papers used or developed in an investigation under [chapter 261 of the Family Code] or in providing services as a result of an investigation.

Id. § 261.201(a). You contend the information in Exhibit D is confidential under section 261.201. Upon review, we find the information at issue consists of files, reports, records, communications, audiotapes, videotapes, or working papers used or developed in an investigation under chapter 261 of the Family Code. *See id.* §§ 101.003(a) (defining “child” for purposes of this section as person under 18 years of age who is not and has not been married or who has not had the disabilities of minority removed for general purposes), 261.001 (defining “abuse” and “neglect” for purposes of ch. 261 of Fam. Code). Thus, the information in Exhibit D is confidential under section 261.201(a) of the Family Code. As you do not indicate the department has adopted a rule that governs the release of this type of information, we assume no such regulation exists. Given that assumption, and based on our review, we determine the department must withhold the information in Exhibit D under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201 of the Family Code.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(1) must reasonably explain how and why this exception is applicable to the information at issue. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977).

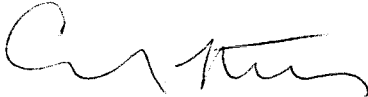
You state the information you have marked in Exhibit E relates to a pending criminal prosecution. Based upon your representation, we find the department has demonstrated that release of the marked information will interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref’d n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Accordingly, the department may withhold the information you have marked under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

In summary, the department must withhold the information in Exhibit C under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 58.007 of the Family Code. The department also must withhold the information in Exhibit D under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 261.201 of the Family Code. The department may withhold the information you marked in Exhibit E under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code. The department must release the remaining information.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cindy Nettles', written in a cursive style.

Cindy Nettles
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CN/dls

Ref: ID# 503016

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)